REMARKS

ON THE

Language of the St. John's

OR

WLASTUKWEEK INDIANS,

WITH A

PENOBSCOT VOCABULARY.

BOSTON.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

In the following pages, the author cannot hope to have added much to the general stock of knowledge concerning the languages of the native tribes of America. They were written from an earnest desire on the part of the writer to do a little for the advancement of this interesting branch of philology, and printed for the amusement of a leisure hour. If, in the one object, he should have failed, he has at least the consolation of having succeeded in the other.

Boston, April, 1834.

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REMARKS

ON

Some Words in the Language

OF THE

ST. JOHN'S OR WLASTUKWEEK INDIANS.

BY H. E. H.

The following words were obtained from a few individuals of the Penobscot tribe, who visited Cambridge in the winter of 1833-4, for the purpose of hunting, and encamped not far from the College. Unluckily, I was not informed of their vicinity until a few days before their departure, and my vocabulary is neither so full nor so correct as I could wish.

The WLAS'TUKWEEK*, or St. John's Indians are a tribe, numbering about 460 souls, who reside upon the river of the same name near the eastern boundary of the State of Maine. From the great intercourse which has always existed between the two native communities, the language of these Indians is almost as well known to the Penobscots as their own.

In the orthography of the Indian words, the system proposed by the Hon. Jno. Pickering has been generally followed. The short *ŭ* is to be sounded as in *hunt*: the other vowels have, in general, their Italian pronunciation: the Spanish *ñ* gives a nasal sound to the preceding vowel: *kh* is guttural.

*Ourastegou, La rivière de St. Jean.—*Rasle, p.* 493. They are often called by other names, as *Malechites, Armouchiquois, etc.*

I. Cognate dialects.

The language of the St John's Indians is well known to be a branch of the wide spread Lenape stock, once spoken from Labrador to Georgia, and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. It is desirable, however, to ascertain to what particular family of derived tongues this dialect may belong. It has been commonly supposed, that the Wlastukweek tribe is to be ranked with those of Narantsuack, *(Norridgewock)* and Penobscot, as a member of the great *Abnaki* nation, which formerly comprised nearly all the native tribes of Maine. The following table will, I think, show conclusively, that we are rather to consider it as an offshoot of the Micmac race, the ancient inhabitants of the country between the St. John's and the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The words in Penobscot and St. John's are from the Indians at Cambridge; the Micmac, from a vocabulary published in the 6th Vol. of the Mass. Hist. Collections.

English.	*Penobscot.*	*St. John's.*	*Micmac.*
One	Pēsŭk	Nēkut	Naakht
Two	Nis	Tābo	Taapooh
Three	Nas	Shīsht	Shisht
Four	Ye′u	Ne′u	Now
Five	Palénskw	Nān	Nahn
Six	Nogodoñs′	Kamatshīn	Nachoukuong
Seven	Toñbāoñs	Aluīgnŭk	Alouaganik
Eight	Nsoñ′sŭk	Ugmultshīn	Ougomoulkechin
Nine	Nolīi	Eskwinātek	Ashkownatook
Ten	Mtāla	Telŭn′	Talung
Woman	Pēnŭm	E′pit	Aapeet
Water	N'bī	Samāgwon	Shamouahn
I	Nia	Nil	Neel
Thou	Kia	Kil	Keel
He	Eg′ma	Nēgŭm	Nakum

Judging from the scanty and incorrect vocabulary in the last Volume but one of the Mass. Hist. Collections, the Passamaquoddies speak a dialect of the Micmac, corrupted, perhaps, by a mixture of Abnaki.

Notes.

1. Besides the verbal differences to be seen in the foregoing specimens, the St. John's Indians have in their language a vocal element, the *sh*, which the Penobscots have the greatest difficulty in pronouncing.

3. In the Passamaquoddy vocabulary before noticed, the word for *ten* is *neqdainsk*, bearing a surprising resemblance to the Abnaki word for *six*, viz: *nekudons*, or *neqdons*. If this be correct, it is a singular instance of a change of meaning in a word, in passing from one dialect to another.

3 Another remarkable proof of the connection existing between the two dialects may be seen in the Micmac for *one* and *two*,—*nekut* and *tabo*, evidently the source of the Abnaki words for *six* and *seven*, viz: *nekut-oñs* and *toñba-oñs*. These coincidences can only be accounted for, by supposing that in the Lenape stock of languages there exist two sets of numerals, from both of which every dialect borrows to complete its particular list of numbers.

The two classes may perhaps be stated as follows:—

	FIRST CLASS.	SECOND CLASS.
1.	Pesuk, peyook, &c.	N'gutti, nekut, nquit, ugwittoh
2.	Nischa, ningh, nis	Tabo, tonba, (*See* Tonbaons)
3.	Nacha, noghhoh, nisht, nas	Shisht
4.	Newo, neu, now	Ieu, yowgh, yau
5.	Nalan, nunon, narau, nan	Palenach, palenskw, paranske,

Does not this open a way for accounting satisfactorily for the difference between the numerals of dialects in other respects almost identical, as in the case of the Minsi and Unami, remarked, long since, by Mr. Duponceau in his correspondence with Mr. Heckewelder?

Still, it must be acknowledged that the reason and use for both of these classes of numbers is not so apparent, especially as many, if not all, of the dialects have preserved a word from each class, for the same numeral. Perhaps one set was used in the process of simple counting, and the other when connected, as adjectives, with nouns; thus, in the St. Johns, *shist* is *three*, when standing alone; but we have Na'hōk *alemu'sōk*, THREE dogs, evidently from the *nacha* of the other class.

II. Grammatical Character.

1. *The distinction of animate and inanimate beings*, which characterises all other Indian languages, pervades this also, and is expressed, in both nouns and verbs, by a difference of termination; thus:—

From *wskĭtsin*, man: *nahōk wskĭt'sinŭk*, two men; from *penŏpskw*, stone: *nahnōl penŏps'kōl*, two stones.

So in verbs, *negma-wlīgu*, he is good; *wligan samāgwon*, the water is good. *Nil-n'mŭskwa alemūs*, I have found a dog; *nil-n'mŭs'komŭn mikhkotānis*, I have found a knife.

2. The Pronouns, in their separate state are:—*Nil*, I; *kil*, thou; *nēgŭm*, he, she, or it; *nīloñ*, we, *(they and I;)* *kiloñ*, we, *(you and I;)* *kilwa*, ye; *negma*, they. But in this state they seldom appear; the manner in which they are abbreviated, when affixed to other words, will appear from the following example:

Dog,—*alemūs.*

My dog,—*nil-n'tēmis*, or *n'tēmis.**
Thy dog,—*kil-k'tēmis.*
His dog,—*nēgum-tēmisŭl.*
Our dog,—*wēnukhts-tēmisŭl.*†
Our dogs,—*niloñte'misanūk.*
Our two dogs,—*niloñ niswuk n'tēmisanuk.*
Their dogs,—*negmantēmisoăk.*

A house,—*wenukhtsīgwŏm.*†

My house,—*nil-nīgwŏm*
His house,—*nēgŭmuĭk'*, *(negum-wik')*
Our house,—*kiloñgwīgan.*
Your house,—*kilwagīgwa.*
Their house,—*negmawīgwŏm,*

3. Diminutives are formed by affixing to the noun some part of a word signifyng *small*,—genereally *sis*, from *piusessan;* as, *tamahīgan*, axe,—*tamahīganŭs'sis*, a little axe, a hatchet.

*In the the following examples, besides the affix, the pronoun in its entire state is also prefixed, probably for the sake of emphasis. It might be omitted without any change of meaning.

†The prefix, *wenukhts*, probably from the indefinite pronoun, à*wenukhts*, somebody, any one, who, &c., may give a general signification to the words to which it is prefiixed; as, some dog, *a* dog, *one of our* dogs,—*a* house, &c.

A

Collection of Words and Phrases

IN THE

PENOBSCOT DIALECT.

[The following list of words, selected from a larger number obtained from the Indians at Cambridge, may serve for comparison with the Dictionary of the Norridgewock tongue by Rasle, lately published in the Memoirs of the A. A. S. The differences between the two dialects are, it will be seen, very slight, consisting principally in the constant change of *r* to *l*, and the frequent interchange of the letters *d* and *t*, *b* and *p*, *o* and *u*, &c. In this dialect, the sounds of the *r*, *f*, *v*, *sh*, and *zh* are wanting.]

Nouns.

BASKET, *abasanōte*

BIRD, *sīps*, *sipsis*

BOOK, *awikhīgan*

BOY, *Wskinoñsis*

BROTHER, (my) *nītsië*

CAT, *p'suīs*; cats, *p'suīsak*

CHEEK, *nanŭ'e*

CHIEF, *sañgmañ*

DOG, *alemūs*; my, *niantēmis*

EAGLE, *sa'wangan*

ENGLISHMAN, foreigner, *ā-wenukhts*

FATHER, *mĭkh'tañgūs*
my f. *n'mikhtangus*
our f. *mikhtañ'gusena*
of us two, *tāgwimikh...sena*
of us (*exc.*) *niŭnan'm...sena*
He was the father of all men, *egma alnonpak mikhtŭnk'soăl*

FIRE, *skwŭtta*

GIRL, *nŭnkswāsis*

GUN, *peskoăn'te*; my, *n'pes.*

HAIR, *pīeswa*

HEAD, *m'tŭp*

HOUSE, *wīgwam*
My h. *nuigwam or nianigwam*; round h. *petegwigan*

INDIAN, *alnoñpe*; the Indians are all dead, *alnoñpegak metsīnegak m'si.*

KNIFE, *ntsekwăkw*

MAN, *sēnoñpe*, *alnonpe*; a good man, *wli-senonpe.*; two good men, *nisoak wligoăk senonpak.*

MOON, *nipoñset*, *espatēsit.*

MOTHER, *nigā'us.*

NOSE, (my) *nianĭkh'tan*

[Numerals. *See page* 4,]

PIPE, *udam'angan*; your p. is good, *wligu kudamangan*

SNOW, *wasañli*

STAR, *wakhtawēsu*; four s. *yēwak wakhtawe'suak*

STONE, *penāpŭskw*

STOVE, *abapskōte*

SUN, *kīzus*

TOWN, *utēn*; to t. *ute'nik*

TURTLE, *tūlbe*

WATER, *n'bi*

WOMAN, *pēnŭm*, *-ūk*

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Pronouns.

I, *nia;* thou, *kia*; he, *egma*; we, (they and I), *niōna;* we, (you and I), *kiōna;* ye, *kiŭwa;* they, *egman.*

I myself, *niakhta*; he himself, *egmakhta*

Who, *āwen;* all, *m'sī*

This or that, *pīlwi, (?)*

Verbs.

Bark: the dog barks, *u-gĭkh'ke alemūs*

Bad, he is, *egmaugauti*; the gun is, *matsigan peskoante*

Be: I am John, *Nia Hasañ*

Build: I build a house, *n'likhtonowigwam*

Go: I am going, *n'mantsi* or *nian'mantsi*; he is *egma mantsu*; I am going to town, *n'mantsolania utenik;* I went, *n'tsŏkhsen utenik*

Good, I am, *nianolam'tu;* he is, *egmawalamtu*

Give: I give you a knife, *k'mīlan 'tsekwăkw*; I give him, *n'milan;* you give me, *k'milin;* he gives me, *egmanmilagŭn;* I met a man who gave me a knife, *n'naska awenukhtz milagŭn' tsekwakw.*

Kill: I kill (killed?) him, *nianikhloñpoñ*; — them, *nianikhlŭwk*; I am killed, *nianikhliga*

Snow: it snows, *kisīpsan;* it snowed, *kisipsanoñpa;* it will snow, *katawipsan.*

Strike: I strike the dog, *nia-n'dagama alemus*

Tie: I tie my shoe, *n'moksnebi'zi;* he, *egmaglabizi*; we, *tziulati'gmena*; we two *tāgwiniūnatziulatigmena;* they, *egmatziulatŏăk;* we do not, *oñda niuna tsiulatigmena;* I will tie, *tsun'glabizi;* I will not, *tsuondan'glabisi;* we will tie, *tsuniunatsiulatigmena.*

Walk, I, *n'mŏkhsĕh*

Particles.

A-hañ or hā-ā, yes.
Kisi, sign of the present,
Ka'dawi, of the future.
Oñta, or onda, no, not.
Siba, to-morrow.
Ta'gwi, sign of the dual,
Ts or *tsu*, of the future.
Tsui, certainly.

THE END.

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